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ORIGIN WHA-00

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ALL POSTS FOR PAO, USSOCOM FOR POLAD

E.O. 12958: N/A

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
REVIEW AUTHORITY: JOHN L MILLS  
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TAGS: OPRC, KPAO  
SUBJECT: WHA GUIDANCE, APRIL 17, 2002

SUMMARY OF CONTENTS:  
WHA PRESS GUIDANCE, APRIL 17 (VENEZUELA)  
END SUMMARY.

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WHA PRESS GUIDANCE, APRIL 17, 2002  
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-- VENEZUELA: REICH CALL TO PEDRO CARMONA --

QUESTION: DID ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE REICH SPEAK WITH  
VENEZUELA'S THEN INTERIM PRESIDENT ON FRIDAY APRIL 12 TO  
ADVISE HIM TO NOT DISSOLVE THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY?

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A: CONTRARY TO A REPORT IN THE NEW YORK TIMES, ASSISTANT  
SECRETARY REICH DID NOT SPEAK WITH THEN-INTERIM PRESIDENT  
PEDRO CARMONA ON FRIDAY APRIL 12 OR AT ANY OTHER TIME DURING  
VENEZUELA'S CRISIS LAST WEEK.

THROUGH OUR EMBASSY IN CARACAS, AMBASSADOR REICH DID CONVEY  
THE EXPECTATIONS OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT THAT THE INTERIM  
GOVERNMENT WOULD RESPECT THE INSTITUTIONS AND PRACTICES OF  
DEMOCRACY IN VENEZUELA, INCLUDING THE CONTINUED FUNCTIONING  
OF ALL BRANCHES OF GOVERNMENT.

IF PRESSED: OVER THE COURSE OF FRIDAY AND SATURDAY,  
AMBASSADOR SHAPIRO SPOKE WITH A NUMBER OF VENEZUELAN  
INVOLVED IN THE EVENTS THERE, INCLUDING THEN INTERIM  
PRESIDENT CARMONA.

THE ASSERTION THAT THE UNITED STATES SOUGHT TO "STAGE MANAGE"  
THE SITUATION IN VENEZUELA, IS FLATLY INCORRECT. OUR  
DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS, LIKE THOSE OF OUR DEMOCRATIC ALLIES, WERE  
FOCUSED ON HELPING VENEZUELAN RESOLVE THEIR CRISIS  
PEACEFULLY AND DEMOCRATICALLY.

THROUGH REGULAR DIPLOMATIC CONTACTS BOTH IN WASHINGTON AND IN  
CARACAS, WE MADE CLEAR OUR REJECTION OF ANY UNCONSTITUTIONAL,  
UNDEMOCRATIC EFFORT BY ANY PARTY IN VENEZUELA.  
POWELL

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